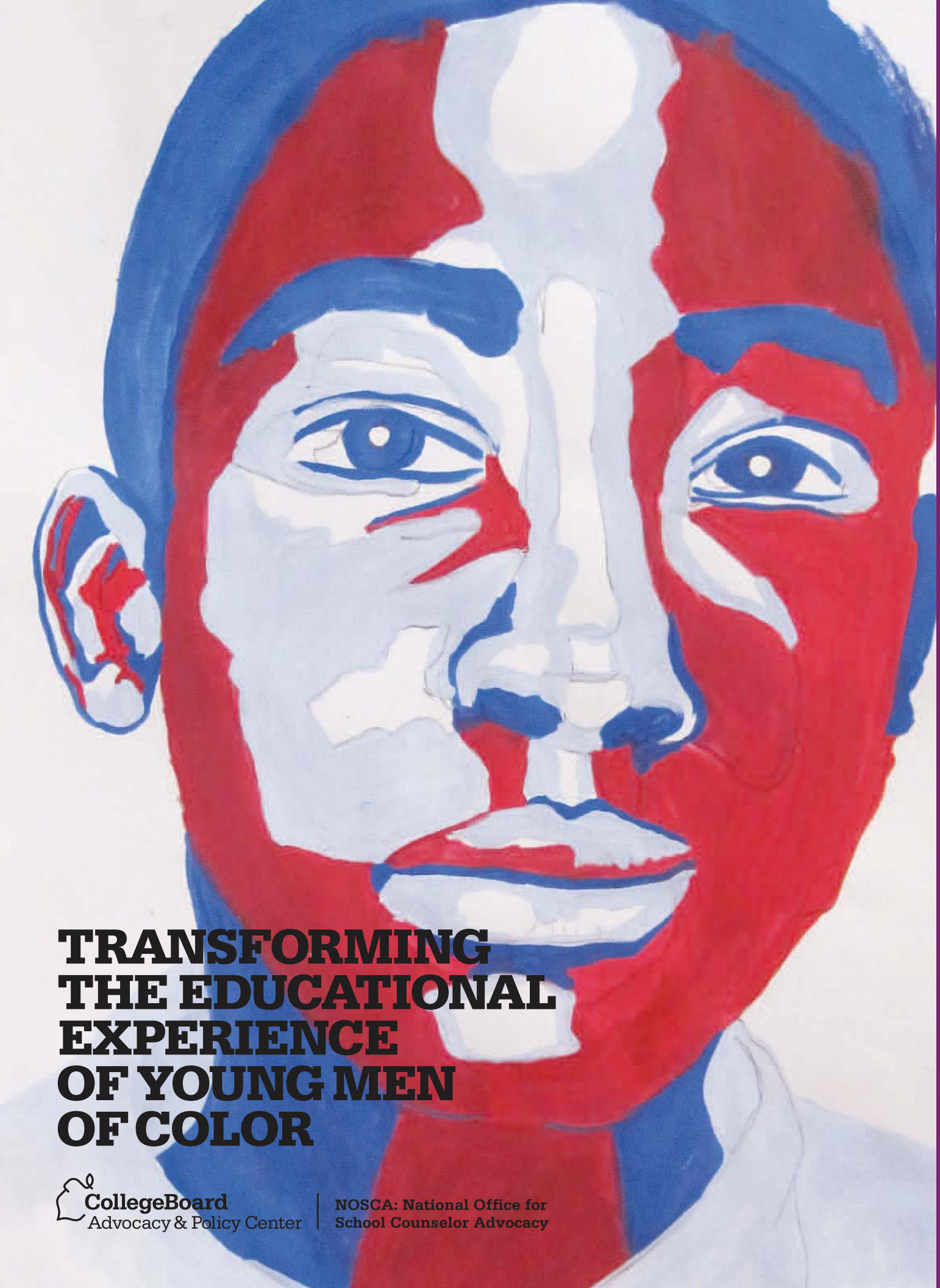

TRANSFORMING THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

CollegeBoard Advocacy & Policy Center | NOSCA: National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERIES | VOLUME 1

CONTENTS

Student Voices
Artwork and writings created by young men of color are featured throughout this publication. Thanks to the Arts at the Core program and AP art teachers for coordinating student contributions. A special thank you to Nancy Barile, English teacher at Revere High School in Revere, Massachusetts, and Fanon Hill, codirector of the Black Male Identity project in Baltimore, Maryland, for the contributions from their programs.

Cover artwork:
Antoine J., 7th Grade

RESEARCH AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE by Jennifer A. Dunn

Recommendations Relevant to the School Counselor and the Counseling Practice:

Increase community, business and school partnerships.

Reform education to ensure college and career readiness.

Enhance cultural- and gender responsive training.

The dreams of young men of color are being lost in the current education system. Young men of color are overrepresented in special education, more likely to be in the streets, in prisons and die at a younger age. To ensure that these realities do not persist it is imperative that the education system is inclusive and supportive of young men of color. In 2008, the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center convened scholars, researchers, activists and practitioners in what were called Dialogue Days to discuss issues pertaining to the educational experiences of young men of color. Information from the conversations was published in a report called the *Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color*, released in 2010.

In response to urgency in the field around the publication's preliminary findings, the Advocacy & Policy Center launched a comprehensive literature review and a qualitative study with students in 2011. This research, *The Educational Experience of Young Men of Color,* seeks to illuminate the current educational experiences and pathways of young men of color in the United States. Key findings in the research show that only 26 percent of African Americans, 24 percent of Native American/Pacific Islanders and 18 percent of Hispanic minority males hold an associate degree or higher, while 51 percent of Hispanic males, 45 percent of African American males, 42 percent of Native American males and 33 percent of Asian American males ages 15 to 24 are unemployed, incarcerated or dead. To address these alarming findings, the report provides a series of recommendations, three of which are directly relevant to the school counselor and the practice of school counseling (see recommendations at left).

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) is calling on school counselors to act on these three recommendations to change their schools, districts and communities, and to ensure that these young men have culturally responsive supports and safety nets for advancement through elementary, middle, and high school education and beyond.

Transforming the Educational Experience of Young Men of Color: School Counseling Series, Volume 1 is the first of a four-volume series. Featured inside are the insights of educational leaders, firsthand accounts of school counselors and the voices and artwork of students. We hope the contents will inspire you, make you reflect on your beliefs and perspectives and challenge your practice. We encourage you to engage in a meaningful dialogue around the series as a way to spark innovative practices to support young men of color and their educational success.

I would like to extend a special thanks to the authors and artists represented in this publication for their willingness to share their expertise and personal perspectives to further the cause of helping counselors and other educators gain additional insight to issues that impact the education of young men of color. ■

Learn more about the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center's foundational research and ongoing initiatives concerning The Educational Experience of Young Men of Color: youngmenofcolor.collegeboard.org.

Jennifer A. Dunn is the director of the National Office for School Counselor Advocacy.

A SOCIAL JUSTICE FRAMEWORK FOR COUNSELING YOUNG MEN OF COLOR

by Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy

The literature is replete with statistics describing the bleak conditions that young men of color face in today's society.[1] For instance, the College Board (2011) recently released a study reporting that nearly half of young men of color ages 15 to 24 who graduate from high school in the U.S. will end up unemployed, incarcerated or dead. Of the five ethnic groups studied, Native American males with high school diplomas were the least likely to be enrolled in postsecondary education programs. National studies have further indicated that African American males are overrepresented in juvenile detention centers and prisons,[2] overrepresented in special education classes,[3] and lag behind other groups of students who enter colleges and universities.[4] And at the same time, over 25 percent of Latino men ages 25 and over in the United States have less than a ninth-grade education, compared to 7 percent of all males in the United States.[5] Because of these staggering statistics, many use terms such as endangered, ineducable, dangerous and at-risk to depict young men of color. And many have argued that these terms lower educators' expectations of young men of color as well as increase the negative self-perception of these youngsters.[6]

Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy is the vice dean of academic affairs and professor of counseling and human services at Johns Hopkins University School of Education.

James M.
12th Grade

Given the extensive achievement gaps between students of color and their white and Asian peers, there is a sense of urgency among educators to incorporate social justice principles into their everyday practice as a means to eradicate educational inequities. Focusing on individual student concerns alone, however, will not always guarantee improved learning outcomes for male students of color. School counseling professionals recommend that school counselors must focus on the relationship between the academic challenges that young men of color face and the systemic factors related to their racial and cultural background and socioeconomic status.[7] As such, using a social justice framework for school counseling is one means of addressing these inequities. Social justice, as defined by Goodman, refers to the idea of creating equity by emphasizing power relations and institutionalized oppression.[8] In the case of addressing the plight of young men of color in schools, a social justice approach emphasizes redistributing the level of access students have to opportunities for success (e.g., rigorous courses) and challenging the implementation of school policies that hinder their success (e.g., suspension policies).

Within school counseling, a social justice–based approach is one in which the counselor uses data to identify marginalized students (e.g., groups that are performing disproportionately lower than other groups) and then challenges school policies and practices that continue to hinder the growth and success of students.[9] Social justice–based counseling in schools requires that counselors lessen their usage of individual-based helping models that would occur in traditional counseling settings. Although individual-based counseling is important, these methods are not always effective when addressing systemic challenges or institutionalized barriers. For instance, high suspension and expulsion rates among African American males are best addressed via systemic interventions (e.g., schoolwide discipline policies) rather than individualized counseling. Below are brief descriptions of three key elements of a social justice–based school counseling program that would enhance the development of young men of color: (1) counseling and intervention planning, (2) collecting and using data for systemic change, and (3) connecting schools, families and communities.

Douglas C.
10th Grade

Counseling and Intervention Planning

Counseling is the cornerstone of what school counselors do and is often the most "comfortable" aspect of the counselor's role in schools. Although systemic change is critical for creating equitable student outcomes, students often need individualized counseling and advising to resolve typical developmental issues that may arise. When approached by young men of color, it is essential that school counselors deliver culturally responsive and appropriate counseling services. This also includes taking into account the societal and environmental factors that influence these students' problems and eventual success.

Cultural differences and cultural group membership can influence the behaviors of not only students but also counselors. In many cases, school counselors think that they are being fair and culturally sensitive when they treat all students the same. Nevertheless, this practice can perpetuate inequities because all students are not the same. For instance, Asian males, compared to their peers of other ethnic backgrounds, may have different experiences and perceptions of the schooling process. To ignore a male of color's unique "lens" through which he sees the world can hinder the outcome of the counseling process.

During the counseling process, it is important for school counselors to acknowledge students' feelings and attitudes about school. Listening to young men of color as they process their attitudes, thoughts and feelings should be

implemented on a regular basis to show respect and to demonstrate that the counselor accepts them for who they are. Building trust and respect between the counselor and the young man of color is critical to the counseling process.

Strengths-based counseling is effective when using a social justice framework. The focus of strengths-based counseling is not on "fixing a broken student" or on fixing a problem. Instead, the focus is on determining student strengths and emphasizing those strengths to resolve, or at least reduce, the frequency of the problem that brought the student to the counselor's office. The strengths-based approach reduces the power structure between the student and the counselor and instills hope that the student has something positive to offer and achieve.

A SOCIAL JUSTICE APPROACH EMPHASIZES REDISTRIBUTING THE LEVEL OF ACCESS STUDENTS HAVE TO OPPORTUNITIES … AND CHALLENGING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES THAT HINDER THEIR SUCCESS.

Another approach to counseling that embodies social justice principles is empowerment-based counseling. Traditional counseling theories and approaches tend to ignore a student's struggles with their environment or the impact of environment on a student's achievement. Young men of color benefit from school counselors who use advocacy and empowerment as parts of the counseling process. Advocacy is the action that school counselors take to facilitate the removal of external and institutional barriers for students' well-being. Empowerment is the process of increasing one's sense of personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals, families and communities can take action to improve their situations. It is a process that fosters power in disenfranchised and powerless groups of people, for use in their own lives and in their communities. At the individual level, school counselors can help young men of color feel empowered enough to make positive changes. Middle and high school male students benefit from group discussions about the differential status of power among groups in society (e.g., comparison of income levels by race) and how to change the cycle of inequities across groups. These discussions among students build critical consciousness, whereby students feel a sense of personal power to make positive changes in their communities, families and lives.

Collecting and Using Data

Data can be useful in determining and uncovering inequities in schools. There are three types of data that are typically gathered by educators: achievement (e.g., test scores), attainment/access (e.g., AP® course enrollment), and school culture (e.g., school climate survey). Whenever possible, these data should be disaggregated by demographics (e.g., race, gender) to illuminate and analyze inequities among groups. Once data is analyzed, social justice–based school counselors target their services to meet the needs of students who are "in trouble" or are at the highest risk of dropping out, being suspended or failing.

Data analysis can also uncover unjust practices that negatively influence student achievement. For instance, course enrollment data may show that Latino and African American male students are being "tracked" or placed disproportionately in less rigorous or remedial courses. As a result of this data analysis, a social

justice–based school counselor would then develop more rigorous course scheduling for these students and advocate for academic support for them.

Connecting Schools, Families and Communities

Social justice-based counseling involves embracing parent and community collaborations and prioritizing the development of partnerships between schools and the communities they serve. Research has shown that students, in general, with "involved" parents, do better in school and are more engaged in learning.[10] And, the research confirms that parents of color value education at the same rate as other parents.[11] However, educators often assume that African American, Latino and Native American parents' culture, values, and norms do not support or complement the culture of education.[12] Thus, many educators have come to accept the idea that parents of color (with the exception of Asian parents) are more of a deficit to their children's educational development than an asset.

From a social justice perspective, it is imperative that school counselors view parents and communities as a valuable resource rather than the major problem. Counselors must refrain from blaming parents and communities ("If his mother would care more, he would do better in school.") and acknowledge the power of family and community involvement. There are three primary functions that schools must undertake in order to "connect" with parents.

1. Provide parents with information and skills to support their children's education.
2. Coordinate community programming that meets the needs and issues that students and families encounter.
3. Recognize the rights of parents — and their fundamental competence — to share in school decision making.

These roles are essential for building relationships with the parents of young men of color and school counselors can lead many of these initiatives.

As I grew up I realized things are not how I envisioned them. When I was little, I thought all my friends, all the other kids, and I would share the same opportunities as we got older ... Eventually, I figured out that where we come from, how our culture differs, and how we are raised affects our opportunities and goals. I feel as if being of color makes things harder than people not of color. We have to work harder for what we want. Even though there are some men of color that do not have goals or even dreams that does not mean that all of us don't. Some want to be successful and do something with ourselves. I know that I am someone who does.

Alfredo M.
10th Grade

Conclusion

The success of young men of color in today's schools lies in providing a school culture that embodies social justice and equity. Schools must not only have high expectations for students but they must also provide culturally appropriate and social justice–based student counseling services for students at most risk for school failure. Social justice-based school counseling, as discussed in this article, can ultimately shift the current outlook for young men of color to more positive outcomes. ■

Use data to achieve equity with NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling guides for elementary, middle and high school: nosca.collegeboard.org.

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BLACK SHEEP & SOCIETY

Even though we are friends
We know where the boundary is
Unlike my brethren
Our bond is unspoken but clear
Emits the flame some fear
Flames warm enough to replace the shame
It becomes my backbone and support
Through these rough-patched days
For we are good-hearted rogues
Misunderstood because we protect our flags
The very source of our spirit our pride
Be proud of your LATINO inside

Javier M.
12th Grade

WORKING WITH PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS

by Hema Katoa

As a Pacific Islander (Tongan American), counselor specialist, licensed clinical social worker, and community advocate, I have had the unique opportunity of working with Pacific Islanders in multiple settings. The following information is intended to help school counselors understand and engage the Pacific Islander students and families they serve.

In 1997, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defined the racial category of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders for the 2000 U.S. Census as a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands.[1] The rapidly growing Pacific Islander population now comprises 0.4 percent (1.2 million) of the nation's total population and is projected to reach over 2.5 million by 2050.[2] Although the Pacific Islander population is relatively small compared to other racial groups, several U.S. states have higher proportions of Pacific Islanders with large, well-established communities. Hawaii, as a Pacific island itself, is host to large communities of not only Native Hawaiians, but islanders from every corner of the Pacific Ocean. On the mainland, growing Pacific Islander communities can be found along the West Coast, Alaska, and several other western states, with smaller populations scattered intermittently eastward across the country. Schools serving Pacific Islander communities are adjusting to the needs and challenges of this growing population. Many schools are encouraging cultural identity and cultural expression by establishing clubs, presenting cultural assemblies, and hosting cultural festivals.

Schools with a significant number of Pacific Islander students may find it useful to provide Pacific Islander cultural awareness information or training to teachers, counselors and administration. If resources are not readily available within a school or district, Pacific Islander community leaders are often willing to assist in projects that will benefit Pacific Islander students and create cultural understanding. High schools should consider involving their Pacific Islander students in such an effort as this will provide an opportunity for students to connect with school personnel and promote student confidence.

Establishing positive relationships with school personnel can greatly influence educational success. For Pacific Islander students, these key relationships are not only crucial but also a matter of cultural significance. Anthropologist Tevita Ka'ili defines the Pacific Islander cultural concept of "Tauhi Va" as the nurturing of socio-spatial ties or the practice of keeping good relations.[3] For most Pacific Islanders, once a positive relationship is established, there is a cultural tendency to nurture and maintain them. These relationships become reciprocal and are strengthened as the involved parties support and assist one another. Pacific Islanders may be unfamiliar with the terminology, however, most will have observed or engaged in the practice of Tauhi Va in their family, community and cultural interactions.

Hema Katoa is a counselor specialist in the Jordan School District in West Jordan, Utah.

School counselors and teachers become increasingly influential as they assist Pacific Islander students and interact with their parents and family.

Family attitudes and involvement can drastically affect the educational success of Pacific Islander students. Educational attitudes for Pacific Islanders can be influenced by many factors, including how long a family has lived in the United States, what island nation they are originally from, and even the birth order of their children. Pacific Islander families can have rigid expectations for their children that include a predetermined career path that may or may not include higher education. School counselors involved in educational and occupational planning should consider these factors when engaging Pacific Islander students. By building a positive relationship with Pacific Islander parents and families, school counselors can improve educational attitudes and advocate for individual student aspirations.

Pacific Islander students face the challenging task of bridging two separate and sometimes conflicting cultures. Attitudes and behaviors that are acceptable in one culture may be entirely inappropriate and frowned upon in another. At home students conform to the expectations, norms and values of their Pacific Islander cultures and then transition to the American culture when at school and abroad.

Pacific Islander students must learn to function in both cultures simultaneously and be able to transition from one to the other fluidly. Students that have difficulty navigating this cultural transition are often struggling in school and other areas of life and may benefit from exploring their cultural identities. Efforts to strengthen Pacific Islander cultural identities can reinforce positive working relationships and should be attempted, to some degree, at every interaction. Here are several simple activities and strategies to engage Pacific Islander students while strengthening their cultural identity:

- For younger students or as an initial interaction, prepare and greet the students in their Pacific Island language(s) or have the students teach you key phrases in that language.
- Using a map or globe, have students locate or assist in locating their island(s) of origin. Inquire whether students have lived on or visited the island(s) and explore the differences between life there and here in America.
- Food! Many if not all Pacific Islander cultural events include food (e.g., Hawaiian luau). Even the smallest offering, candy or a stick of gum, is a gesture of friendship, but don't be surprised if the students offer something to you first.
- Humility is a highly valued trait among Pacific Islanders and is an expression of respect for others. When engaging students and families, a humble approach by the counselor or teacher will get one further than just having all the right answers and solutions.

Peter F.
College Student

Once a positive working relationship is established, school counselors should influence and encourage Pacific Islander students to take more rigorous course work and consider a broader field of career and educational options. School counselors definitely play a significant role in the educational success of Pacific Islander students. ■

Pledge to "own the turf" of college and career readiness counseling, receive the Own the Turf kit, and access an online network of school counselors at nosca.collegeboard.org/about/own-the-turf.

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IDENTITY MATTERS:
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

by Stedman Graham

For years, I could not understand people when they talked about having fun in their lives. I had always felt struggle — I struggled with being in a culturally deprived community. Because Whitesboro was an all-black town in an all-white county, we always heard that nothing good ever came out of Whitesboro. I struggled with ridicule and with feelings that my race was holding me back. Family circumstances were holding me back. Essentially, I had a victim mentality. Fortunately, at an early age I discovered basketball, at which I was able to excel. Although growing up with low self-esteem and lack of confidence, I tried to be the best I could be in everything that I did. I accepted the labels, the roles — some good, some bad — as the substance of who I was. A lot has changed since I was this young person.

As I grew into adulthood, I found I was looking for something — and that something was equality. I was missing something in the core of my being. It took me quite a while to realize it wasn't about how other people defined me: it was about how I defined myself. How I define myself in terms of my relationship, my family, my work, my talents and abilities, my skills. Gradually, I started to recognize that my future was truly in my own hands, that the only limits in my life were those I placed on myself. I learned that personal success required self-awareness — I became conscious of what was possible for me as an American citizen. I learned how to look inside myself and to replace feelings of resentment and insecurity with actions of love.

Most important, I came to understand the process of how to love myself by organizing everything that I loved and then making the information relevant to my passions, skills, and talents. I would take the 24 hours I had in a day — which is the only thing that makes all of us equal — and create a process for continuous improvement every day of my life. I began to understand how to build a foundation for growth and development from the inside. As I began to change my thinking and began learning how to take information and education and make it relevant to who I was as a human being, I began to understand the process of how to develop an identity.

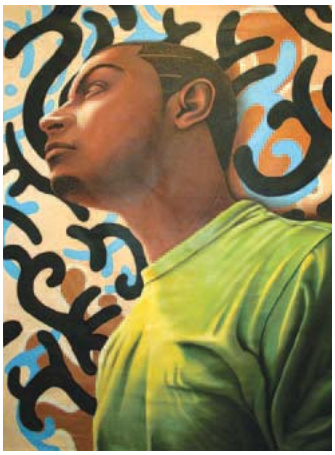
Stedman Graham is chairman and CEO of S. Graham & Associates, a management and marketing consulting company that specializes in the corporate and educational markets.

Christian C.
11th Grade

Addressing the Lack of Identity

Before one can commit to a personal vision, or act with purpose, first one must develop a strong sense of self. Individuals without a plan or purpose are easily misguided or misled. Without a personal vision, an individual is more likely to be carried by the influence of his environment into a life requiring little reflection or development. A person who does not claim his identity feels victimized by life, powerless to change his situation and apathetic to the consequences of his decisions, as they appear to bear little influence on his circumstances. Passive resignation to accept life as completely beyond one's control creates feelings of depression, hopelessness and despair. In this condition, one fails to thrive and may make poor choices affecting one's physical, mental, moral and emotional well-being.

As there are few forums devoted to discovering one's authentic self, most people will rely on external labels, such as race, economic status, a job or family history, to serve as a placeholder for identity. When a person believes external characteristics comprise the substance of identity, that person either will attempt to construct an identity by continually seeking different labels for himself, or will settle for the chance circumstance of his environment as the final word on his identity. In either case, individuals who are not conscious of their internal being will likely feel frustrated and insignificant.



Francisco G.
College Student

Reverse the Learning Process

Unfortunately, the American academic system provides few opportunities for students to learn who they are through inward focus and personal development. In school, the way we learn requires us to memorize, take tests, repeat back the information and then two weeks later we forget everything. The focus is all on the external and the material world. Students are never asked or taught to build from the inside out, oftentimes getting trapped in a cycle controlled by illusions they think are real.

Our objective should be to provide our young men with the perspective and tools to become self-aware, cognitive thinkers and internally motivated. In addition to that, young men have labels placed on them on a daily basis, most of which reflect negative or low expectations. The labels may come from the media, the people in the neighborhood and even their own family, making young men think that they're not good enough, when in fact the process for success is the same for everybody. Eventually, these young men identify with the labels, believing that is all they have and defines who they are — they may even take pride in the labels. We have to give young men the information they need to define themselves as opposed to having the world define them. It is important for young men to understand how to:

- Change how they think about themselves and their possibilities.
- Recognize and analyze attitudes and behaviors that stand in the way of success.
- Develop a vision for their lives.
- Focus on leadership, values and goals.
- Create a leadership approach suited to their character, values and goals.
- Appreciate and learn to invest in themselves — keys to achieving individual excellence.

Moving Without the Ball

My book, *Move Without the Ball: Put Your Skills and Your Magic to Work for You*, encourages students to widen their definition of a successful life and increase their career options by building a solid academic and personal foundation. It teaches them how to build an identity first. We all know the story. It's about young people

who are brimming with potential. They single-mindedly focus on developing their athletic abilities and neglect other areas. They are sure they are going to make it in the pros. Then, in his senior year, a student blows out his knee. Or he hasn't studied, so he doesn't have the grades to get into the college that wants to offer him an athletic scholarship or the academic skills to remain there if he does enroll.

Too many young men believe becoming a professional athlete is their only opportunity for success. *Move Without the Ball* provides an opportunity for student athletes to learn and apply a practical, systemic process for breaking free of the negative influences on their performance and lives, such as the impact of race, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status. Implemented in life or sports, these skills will help the student reach his full potential.

I created a nine-step plan for myself called the Nine Step Success Process. The Nine Step Success Process is a life management and learning system that teaches students how to organize life based on their identity.

When growing up as a black man, you face many challenges such as selling drugs, since some believe that selling drugs can help their family financially. Another challenge is putting in the effort to go to school and try your hardest, while having a sociable life style. When you come to school, you have to set a goal for yourself so that you don't get sidetracked. At home, you have to be able to take enough time to do your homework. In the neighborhood, you have to change the way you are, but also be YOU and remember not to get sucked into too much.

Anthony B.
9th Grade

The Nine Step Success Process

Step 1: Check Your ID Self-awareness is how success begins. What are your strengths? What moves you forward? What holds you back? What are your passions?

Step 2: Create Your Vision Your vision is your life's destination. A well-defined vision enables you to set meaningful goals for your business or personal life. How do you envision your future and what is possible for you?

Step 3: Develop Your Travel Plan If you are to fulfill your vision for a better life, you must create a plan of action. When you begin to work toward your goals through a plan of action, you assert power over your life. Planning saves time, keeps you focused and builds confidence.

Step 4: Master the Rules of the Road You need guidelines to keep you on track in pursuit of a better life. Characteristics to guide your life include honesty, hard work, determination and a positive attitude.

Step 5: Step into the Outer Limits To grow, you have to leave your comfort zone, confront fears and take risks. Risk is a natural part of life — to be successful, you must learn to overcome your natural fears and step outside what has become comfortable and familiar.

Step 6: Pilot the Seasons of Change Learn how to create change and manage your response. Challenges occur when the pace of change exceeds our ability to change, and events move faster than our understanding. However, with change comes opportunity and growth.

Step 7: Build Your Dream Team No one makes it alone. Build supportive relationships, perhaps with mentors who will help you work toward your goals. Trust is critical to building a strong support team, but trust is not easily earned — real trust is established over time.

Step 8: Win by a Decision What you are in this world is largely the result of the decisions you have made so far in your life. The choices you make will be one of your greatest challenges.

Step 9: Commit to Your Vision Devote your time and energy on a consistent basis to pursue your goals and vision. A commitment is something you live and something you renew every day. Commitment is doing rather than saying.

Remember you are not your circumstances, you are your possibilities. ■

Get the latest strategies, tips and handouts used by today's most experienced and dedicated college counselors in the College Board's College Counseling Sourcebook*: store.collegeboard.com.*

FROM ASSIMILATION TO EDUCATION

by Vicki Bisbee

THE STRUGGLE OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS

American Indians are a special and unique group of people, and although they are one of the smallest, and sometimes overlooked, minority groups in the U.S., they have made some of the most significant contributions to our country and currently face some of the most difficult challenges. Much of the result of the history of events for American Indians is now reflected in their low achievement scores and high dropout rates. I would like to share a brief history of the education of American Indians and what the current data tell us. Here in Montana, we serve nearly 17,000 Indian/Alaskan Native students who account for almost 12 percent of all students in grades K–12. According to the National Center for Education Statistics for school year 2008-09, the dropout rate for American Indians/Alaska Natives was 6.3 percent; two and a half times the rate for whites and similar to the rates for blacks (6.6 percent) and Hispanics (6.0 percent). The 2008-09 dropout rate for American Indian high school students in Montana was 12.7 percent, over three times the rate for white students (4.1 percent).

Vicki Bisbee is a school counselor with the Wolf Point School District in Wolf Point, Montana.

James M.
12th Grade

Historical Perspective of American Indian Education

It has been almost 400 years since Indians were first enrolled in an educational setting (East India School, 1621) with the mission to help them "learn a civil way of life."[1] Harvard College was founded 15 years later and included a special "college-within-a-college" set up for 20 Indian students.[2] From then on numerous colleges and boarding schools were established to teach Indian youth to read and write the English language. Once the government made money available to establish boarding schools, day schools and mission schools, it became a political playing field to see who could get the money and attempt to assimilate Indian children.

In the 1800s government representatives came to the reservations and took Indian children from their families to schools. In later years, some families sent their children to boarding schools (and still do) due to poverty or issues with white-driven public schools. Indian children were given English names, their

BUT THE IMPACT OF ASSIMILATION HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE IDENTITY AND SELF-WORTH OF AMERICAN INDIANS THAT HAS CARRIED OVER FOR GENERATIONS.

clothing changed, they were punished for speaking their native language and boys had their long hair cut. Boarding school experiences differed for Indian children but many experienced verbal, physical and sexual abuse.

American Indian males were often looked upon as the providers and decision makers for their tribe, clan and family. But the impact of assimilation had a profound effect on the identity and self-worth of American Indians that has carried over for generations. The failure of acculturating Indians is evident in the high rates of poverty, suicide, alcoholism, violence and unemployment rates that run as high as 70 percent on reservations.

Indian Education Today

We have made huge strides in improving the educational opportunities for American Indian students across the country. John Patrick Williams (Democratic member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Montana), for example, wrote an encouraging commentary in the *Billings Gazette* (Sept. 12) in 1999. He described graduating from college in a class of 900 in 1961, at which time there were 66 Native Americans graduating … in the whole country! He went on to say that 40 years later, in 2000, there would be more than 14,000 American Indians graduating from college, and more Indian students would be receiving doctorate degrees than the total that graduated from college in 1961. I feel much of this progress can be attributed to the civil rights movement of the '60s; the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968; the establishment of the U.S. Department of Education National Advisory Council on Indian Education; and tribal colleges, as well as other significant Indian programs such as Johnson-O'Malley.

Tribal colleges have been a huge factor in supporting Indian education. With the Navajo Nation establishing the first tribal college in 1968, there are now 34 tribal colleges, in the U.S. and Canada. Montana has the largest number of tribal colleges, with one on each of its seven reservations. Fort Peck Community College, established on the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Reservation in Montana in

1978, wasn't an option when I graduated from high school. Today it is a wonderful opportunity for our young people who don't want, or aren't ready, to leave the reservation. It serves both Indians and non-Indians with an affordable tuition and incentive for all area high school graduates to attend tuition-free their first year directly after graduation.

The Future of Indian Education

Tribes and states are working diligently across the country to find ways to improve graduation and decrease dropout rates, as well as academic achievement for all students. Here in Montana, the Office of Public Instruction implemented "Indian Education for All" in 1999. The state legislature enacted this law to ensure that every Montanan learns about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians. The Montana Office of Public Instruction website provides data on the progress of American Indian students, professional development, resources and many lesson plans that incorporate Indian education. This is the type of progressive policy that will help American Indian students regain a sense of pride in their heritage and recognize their contributions to our nation.

The Montana University System, which is comprised of 14 colleges and universities, offers American Indian Tuition Waivers for students who are of one-fourth or more American Indian blood and demonstrate financial need. Other community and private colleges also offer diversity waivers that help bridge the affordability of higher education for many American Indian students.

We must continue to incorporate programs that support American Indian Education in K–16. Professional school counselors can play a significant role in recognizing and supporting these students to help close the achievement gap that exists. Here are a few ideas to consider:

1. Identify the American Indian students in your school and become familiar with scores, attendance and family background.
2. Prepare a plan to contact and support these students. Consider having a club or a quarterly celebration honoring students or a social gathering for the students and their families.
3. Be aware of community resources that serve American Indians, have print materials available and provide links to these resources on your school website.
4. When talking with students, ask about their heritage and involvement with culture. Every student will have had a different cultural experience from traditional to more contemporary and assimilated.
5. Invite students and families to share their culture at a school event.
6. Recognize and celebrate National American Indian Heritage Month in November.

There are many things we can do to improve the educational experience for our American Indian students. Fostering a sense of pride and connectedness will be key. ■

Inspire students who don't think college is in their future through real-life stories from their peers with the College Board's YouCanGo!™ online tool: ycg.org.

I do not completely know myself. I do not have the slightest idea. I know what I dream of: to go to college, get a career, get married, start a family, live in the country, and live a life I deem normal. Just because we come from different places, that does not mean we as one race, the human race, can not have the same dreams, hopes, wants, desires or visions for the future. I am a child of Uncle Sam's and America is my homeland.

Kevin A.
11th Grade

1. Alice C. Fletcher, *Indian Education and Civilization: A Report Prepared in Answer to Senate Resolution of February 23, 1885* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1988).
2. Ibid.

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SYMBOLISM AS A MEDIATOR OF BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT

by Fanon Hill

Symbolism is an integral part of healthy identity formation for young black males. It can promote positive bonding with healthy adults, high expectations, cultural and historical awareness, and intellectual and academic preparation. In "African Culture and Symbolism: A Rediscovery of the Seam of a Fragmented Identity," Professor Andrew Ifeanyi Isiguzo states that man is able to make representations of his cultural identity through symbols in the forms of arts, language, myth, ritual, names and more. Symbolism enables a vision quest; a quest that allows children, youth and adults to critically remember and re-create the healthy traditions and cultural values of the past for the sake of our future. Symbolism can be used to assist young black males in exploring identity within academic settings while helping educators analyze their own attitudes, ideas and beliefs about black male achievement.

Fanon Hill serves as codirector of the Black Male Identity project and is founder and executive director of the Baltimore City Youth Resiliency Institute.

Tevin H.
8th Grade

Today, perhaps more so than ever before, there is a profound need to develop and reposition outlooks on what it means to be a black male in both school and out-of-school settings. In a national context where much of the current conversation about black male achievement is viewed through a deficit-based lens, the creation and management of fresh symbols has the power to shift perceptions of black males from problems to be fixed to human beings in possession of the full right to pursue academic success and effect change in their own voice.

SYMBOLISM ENABLES A VISION QUEST; A QUEST THAT ALLOWS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS TO CRITICALLY REMEMBER AND RE-CREATE THE HEALTHY TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL VALUES OF THE PAST FOR THE SAKE OF OUR FUTURE.

When understood as a functional medium, symbols can help us understand why so many young black males are choosing not to endorse forms of participation that do not allow them to undergo rites of passage into "healthy" adulthood. Recently, there has been movement in the development and promotion of the role of art and positive cultural identity in black male achievement. A few examples include:

- The Heinz Endowments Culturally Responsive Arts Education Initiative, which is based on empirical and anecdotal evidence that the arts, positive racial identity and culturally responsive pedagogy can lead to increased achievement and resilience in African American children;
- Question Bridge: Black Males project, which facilitates a dialogue between a critical mass of black men from diverse and contending backgrounds, creating a platform for them to represent and redefine black male identity in America; and
- The Black Male Identity (BMI) project in Baltimore, Maryland, is a powerful example of a successful citywide campaign focusing solely on the power of symbolism. Through funding from the National Campaign for Black Male Achievement, BMI was conceived as a way to build a model within Baltimore to conduct community-wide engagements building an authentic counter-narrative to prevailing negative stereotypes that present obstacles to achievement for black men and boys. Public and private school educators have played a crucial role in the success of BMI by opening up their classrooms to community-based artists committed to coexploring black male youth identity in all of its complexity, resulting in an expanded framework for supporting black male achievement.

In 1925, scholar Alain Locke wrote, "Democracy itself is obstructed and stagnated to the extent that any of its channels are closed." Today, school counselors, educators and policymakers have the opportunity to open closed channels that lead to college and career aspirations for black male children and youth. The future of America is inextricably tied to their decision. ■

Use ten effective counseling practices from the College Board's Inspiration Award-winning schools to achieve equity in your schools: nosca.collegeboard.org.

STOLTUS INSOMNIA

There is a notion stuck in my head
Whether they'd be issues of bigotry or conflict between bad blood
When someone wanted to unify the world results in countless people dead
Then in situations of racial confrontation I find children's tears mixed in mud
Is it merely a dream of our blue Earth to come together without being painted red

If I go to school to change the world one day we'll be happy
A childish dream mocked by passing glances without condescending words to be said
Shouldn't there be more initiative since the state of acceptance is extremely crappy
As I lay down to enjoy my delusional dreams after I close my eyes and go to bed

To sculpt out world and engraft it new I'll use my writing as a chiseling tool
On it a gilded path where we as one people can equally tread,
However in order to fulfill my dreams I must first go to school

A fool's notion forever rattling in my head

Kevin A.
11th Grade

TALKING WITH COUNSELORS

The College Board (CB) is talking with school counselors across the country to gain insights into how their practice supports young men of color. In this interview, MARYN FUJIEDA (MF) from Waipahu High School in Waipahu, Hawaii, relates her insights and experiences.

CB: What is the demographic landscape of your school?
MF: Waipahu High is comprised mainly of immigrant and English language learner students. I work primarily with Filipino, Samoan and Micronesian students.
CB: Based on your experience working with young men of color, what do you think can be done in our educational system to support their success?
MF: First, we must understand that there are lots of factors that hinder our young men of color from progressing through the education system, one of which is their lack of awareness of American expectations, catching them up to the norms of our American education system. Our system may be different from what they are accustomed to, so we must help them find their place, because they often struggle to figure out who they are, and how they fit into school and American society.

Our educational system should be more adaptive to their needs. Oftentimes, immigrant and ELL students get lost in the system and do not get the support they need. As educators, we should take the time to develop strategies and implement interventions for the success of all of our students.
CB: In the report on young men of color, it talks about the lack of success that these young men have moving through the traditional pipeline. They often have to take alternative routes in order to reach their educational goals. Do you feel this is true for the Filipino students or the young men of color in your school?
MF: My students do tend to take nontraditional routes. I think our immigrant young men of color sometimes get frustrated by classes. They struggle to the point where they just want to give up. And [because they] don't want to persist … they disengage or drop out. Many end up going to alternative educational programs, like adult night schools, or they find employment.
CB: If a school counselor is supporting many students that have different cultural backgrounds, how can the school counselor be effective in supporting them all?
MF: Start by learning the values that are really important within the culture, understand the expectations and the roles within the family and community, and most important, be aware of the culture's approach to education.

Maryn Fujieda is a high school counselor at Waipahu High School in Waipahu, Hawaii.

When I started my career as a new school counselor, I oftentimes found myself frustrated because of the low family involvement. So, then I decided to talk with the Filipino families and people in the community. That's when I found out that, in the Filipino culture, the school and those who worked in the school were seen as authority figures. So, the families would defer all decisions to the school. It's like they were entrusting us with their children. I then started to explain to the Filipino parents the differences between parental involvement in American schools and schools in the Philippines and the importance of supporting their children's educational progress.

CB: If you were asked to develop an educational setting where you would intentionally focus on the success of young men of color, what would it look like?

MF: I think it depends on the community and the context of the school in which you work. I am not saying that there should not be any expectations or educational standards, but I feel like there should be more flexibility in how schools allocate money, how programs are implemented or policies are enforced, because each school's community is different and there should be a sensitivity and cultural responsiveness to those differences. Schools should adapt to suit the needs of their specific communities and student populations.

I FOUND OUT THAT, IN THE FILIPINO CULTURE, THE SCHOOL AND THOSE WHO WORKED IN THE SCHOOL WERE SEEN AS AUTHORITY FIGURES. SO, THE FAMILIES WOULD DEFER ALL DECISIONS TO THE SCHOOL. IT'S LIKE THEY WERE ENTRUSTING US WITH THEIR CHILDREN.

For example, I would ask for a smaller school setting, because — as much as we try to provide support services — many young men of color are getting lost within the larger school setting.

There also should be more opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities. For example, we have 1,225 students and there are only so many slots for certain athletic teams. More opportunities would allow young men of color to build confidence or find other measures of their success. And if there are more positive experiences at school, it might help them to remain in and engage in school.

CB: Any last words that you would like to add? Some words of wisdom as a school counselor who is working with young men of color?

MF: I ensure that I engage all of my students, helping them work to become college and career ready. I also work with parents and families, empowering them and providing them information and skills necessary to help their children succeed. Last, when I hit a challenge I utilize the resources that are available to me in the school and community to overcome those obstacles. ■

As I look into the future, I try not to forget my family's humble beginnings and the many sacrifices they've made for me. I hope to end my high school career with even more of my goals accomplished. The most important is to be accepted into a top-choice university where I hope to continue my success in life as a student, a leader, and an American.

Brian M.
11th Grade

HOMBRE NOBLE CLUB

by Mario A. Valladolid-Rodriguez

Before we can start analyzing the Latino students' experience in our schools, we have to first look at our school system. I will start off by presenting demographic information from statistical data from the California Department of Education's Educational Demographics Unit. Next, we will take a look at what effects these findings might have on the Latino student population. Finally, you will read about a program that my department and I use in the schools to help Latino students succeed.

In California, Latinos make up 46 percent of the student population; however, they drop out in disproportionate numbers compared to other students. Sixty-four percent of the 2010 dropouts in our district (481 students) were Latinos. In 2008, only 30 percent of the Latinos in our district were UC-/CSU- (University of California/California State University) eligible. In 2009–2010, an average of 50 percent of Latino students in grades 2–7 were scoring at or above proficient levels in math; but as the grade level increased, the number of proficient students decreased substantially. In English language arts, fewer than 70 percent of Latinos scored proficient or above. Once again, the numbers decreased as the grade level increased. There is a major achievement gap in California between Latinos and other students, but I consider it to be an "engagement" gap rather than an "achievement" gap.

If we accept that the engagement gap is real, then we can postulate that students do not drop out of school — they are pushed out by academic curricula that do not engage them. Our school system has not adapted well to the new demographics; students are not engaged enough to feel included in the learning process and are therefore not motivated to excel. Teachers are working with

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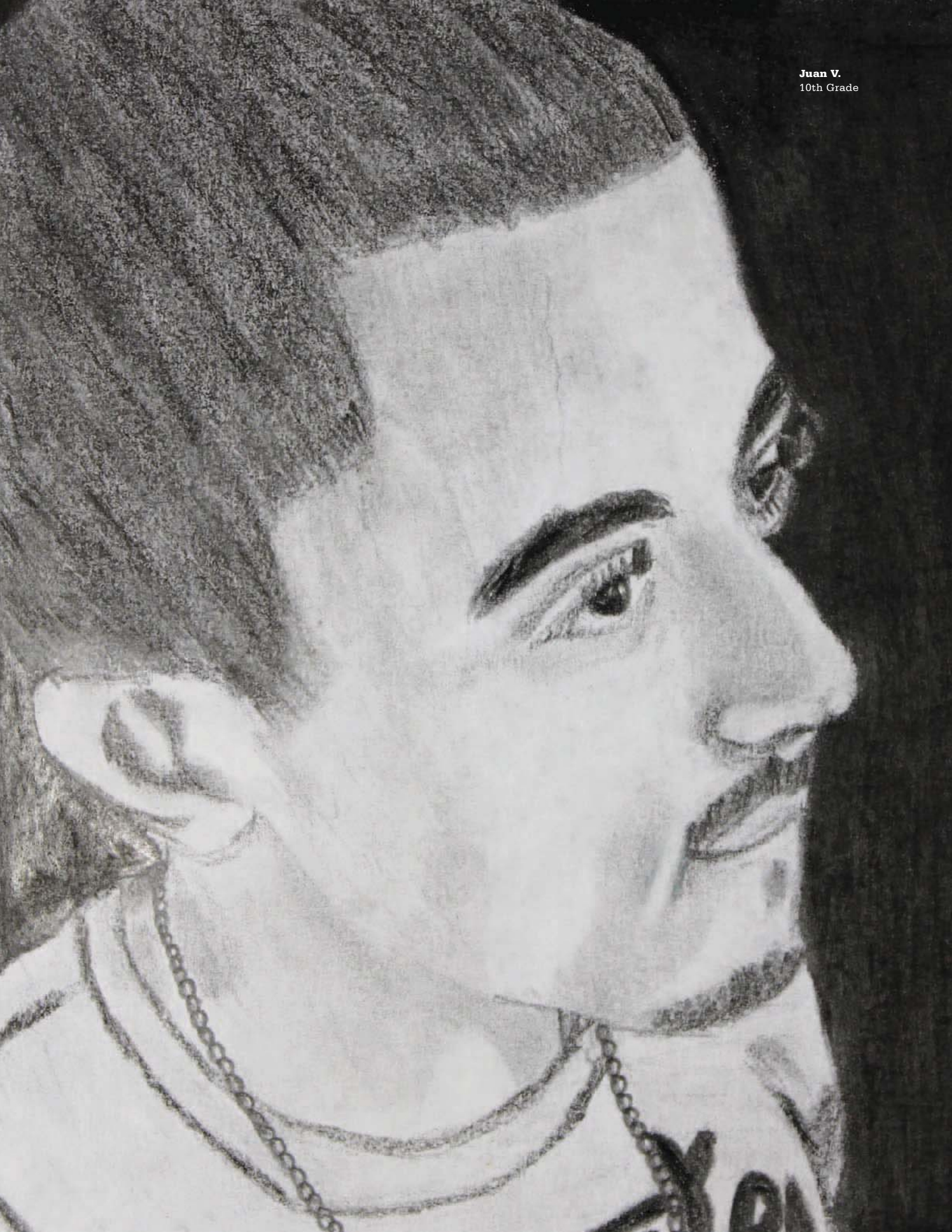

Juan V.
10th Grade

outdated curricula that are culturally irrelevant to the new population. Textbooks and lesson plans in history, for example, do not teach to the appropriate audience. Many of our schools are majority Latino, yet the curricula that are being used do not have any relevance to these students' cultural heritage and history. In my experience, students feel excluded since their ability to speak Spanish is not looked upon as a valuable asset; instead, being multilingual is viewed as an inhibitor to academic success. (Internationally, multilingual students are perceived as academically refined; in this country monolingual, English only, curricula are the norm.)

In addition, acculturation and assimilation are strongly recommended to students as being necessary in order to succeed in school and after graduation.

DURING THE ACTIVITY, STUDENTS LIST EVERYONE THAT IS AFFECTED BY THEIR ACTIONS, AND LEARN THAT AN IMPORTANT PART OF BEING A MAN OF YOUR WORD IS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS.

Regardless of what you believe the norm should be, the demographics in our schools and neighborhoods have changed over the past 50 years. Our methods of teaching, school district policies and procedures, textbooks and curricula, however, have not and neither has our attitude. It is essential to change these methods to meet the needs of our students and to create a more inclusive and successful environment.

Our teacher and school staff diversity are not representative of the student population in our schools. In California in 2010, there was a 16 percent Latino teacher population, compared to 14 percent in 2001. In 2010, there were 87 Latino administrators compared to 124 Latino administrators in 2001, a decrease of nearly 30 percent. Latinos made up 17 percent of pupil services staff in 2010 compared to 12 percent in 2001. In nine years, there has only been a 2 percent increase of certified Latino staff. Since the student population in California public schools is 46 percent Latino while only 16 percent of the certified staff is Latino, it is obvious the school system is experiencing a severe underrepresentation of Latino staff members. This leads to a noticeable lack of role models for Latino students.

For whatever reason, the school system is failing these students, perpetuating the cycle of poverty, marginalization, incarceration and violence in Latino communities. According to the Children's Defense Fund report, America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline, 2007, 80 percent of adults in prison are high school dropouts and 75 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system are also high school dropouts. It is no coincidence that Latinos make up the largest population of prison inmates in California, since they also make up the largest number of dropouts.

My department and I have successfully begun to change the way educators engage Latino students. Our Race/Human Relations and Advocacy Department runs a program called "Hombre Noble" (Noble Man). There are two stages of this program. The first is the Circulo de Hombres program we run in elementary and middle schools. We use the Hombre Noble curriculum that was introduced to the San Diego Unified School District in 1999 by the Latinas/Latinos Achieving More Academically (LLAMA) Advocacy Program.

This curriculum derives from the "El Joven Noble" curriculum written by Jerry Tello, an expert in the areas of family strengthening, community mobilization and

culturally based violence prevention. El Joven Noble offers strategies and lesson plans that people can use to run groups for young Latino men, such as "Yo soy un hombre de Palabra" (I am a man of my word). This concept is the foundation of the entire program. The first thing we teach is what it means to have Palabra. During the activity, students list everyone that is affected by their actions, and learn that an important part of being a man of your word is taking responsibility for your actions.

The curriculum also focuses on identity. In "Quien soy?" (Who am I?), the students are given the opportunity to tell the group who they are by designing a short presentation around their "I am" poem. They also get to tell the group who they are not. For example, "I am a Chicano; I am not a gang member!" This activity is very powerful because so often the students believe they have been racially profiled by teachers and staff and never given the opportunity to express who they really are. (I believe that in some cases the schools create gang members by placing false labels on students and then the young men accept that as their identity.)

The group also learns about the indigenous roots of Mexico and the United States. We reference the teachings and the history of the Mexica, commonly known as the people of the Aztec empire. We teach the students to count and to decipher the Aztec calendar in the Nahuatl language, which was the common language of the Mexicas. This part of the program links students to their past, and it builds their pride, gives them purpose, validates their history, begins to engage them and includes them in the curriculum. By doing this, their grades, behavior and attendance steadily improve and they move on to high school.

Even in the face of difficult hardships, I have my aspirations and academic successes to keep leading me forward. My dream is to major in engineering after high school and become someone who will help innovate and change our society. With these ambitions in mind, I have endured an inordinate amount of responsibility ... I want to break away from the unhappy environment that I live in now ... I want to be happy for the person I will be in the future and what I will do for society.

Luis M.
12th Grade

At the high school level, the students become a part of the Hombre Noble Club. They get to practice their leadership skills by running for office (president, VP, etc.). They participate in community service activities that they are interested in, like coordinating immigration forums, cleaning up their neighborhoods, donating toys to children during Christmas, and others. The objective of this club is to give the leadership of the program to the students. They get to own the program, which significantly helps their engagement in the public school system become real for them. They begin to engage themselves by keeping each other in line when they are slacking in their academics and/or behavior. They respect their organization so much that they do not wish to taint it with negative reviews from teachers, staff, administrators or other students. They protect it like a family and their positive deeds receive positive feedback as the stereotypes and negative self-perceptions begin to fade.

The Hombre Noble program is successful because it is connecting the students to their Latino roots and history. This program is very traditional and everything included in the curriculum comes from the teachings of our community elders — respect, honesty and determination. We are bringing the human factor back into the classroom by validating everyone's culture, ethnicity, nationality and heritage. In a sense, we are humanizing our students and giving them a voice through historical academic inclusion. I have seen for myself what happens when students feel appreciated again and become part of a greater group that is full of positive historical references; they begin the process of becoming self-aware. Students begin believing in themselves, they stand up for themselves and they do not allow anyone, including their own community, to make them feel inferior. As a result, we are starting to empower this generation, moving these students toward academic success and social inclusion. ■

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SUPPORTING MINORITY STUDENTS IN SCIENCE

by Freeman A. Hrabowski III

When I arrived at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), 25 years ago, I realized that large numbers of African American male students were not doing well academically, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). With Baltimore philanthropist Robert Meyerhoff, who was interested in supporting young black males, we started the Meyerhoff Scholars Program in 1988 to determine ways of increasing the number of African American males succeeding in these disciplines. Research showed then that many of these young black males were not succeeding in high school, and that they were often seen as disruptive and less engaged than other groups. There was evidence also that disproportionately low numbers of these students enrolled in advanced courses, and too few were entering and succeeding in college. It is troubling that research today shows similar results.

For more than 20 years, the Meyerhoff Program — which was broadened early on to include women, students from other minority groups and majority students interested in diversity issues — has helped students to achieve at the highest levels. Of the 700 students who have graduated from the program, more than 80 percent have gone on to graduate programs, and large numbers have received

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Serge O.
12th Grade

STEM Ph.D.'s and M.D./Ph.D.'s. Most important, half of the African American students have been male. The approach we have taken with all of the students has been strengths-based, as we are constantly helping students understand those assets they bring to the campus — from resilience and a determination to succeed to being tough-skinned because of previous challenging situations.

Our experience with the Meyerhoff Program has stimulated conversations among admission staff members, faculty and staff in general about the need to help young African American males interview effectively for admission to the university. The fact is that large numbers of the applications we receive from African Americans are from young women, and we have found that faculty and staff often are more impressed by the enthusiastic and positive approach of these women in interviews. In contrast, young African American men tend to be less communicative and less willing to show enthusiasm. It became clear that we needed to explain to them how important it is when asked questions to demonstrate their passion for science through their answers. In fact, we essentially have been saying to male applicants that a "laid-back" approach will not be successful. Helping these African American males appreciate the need to think about their approach in interviews, in classes and in preparation for their careers is critically important. It also has been helpful to encourage conversations among advisors, school counselors, and other faculty and staff — of all races — about our approach to giving support to these students, including opportunities for interaction in groups and an emphasis on older black male students supporting younger students. Most important, we know we must ensure that young black males learn to interact with staff and students of all races so they will have broad support networks to help them as they face challenges.

Melvin O.
10th Grade

Our experience with the Meyerhoff Program also has taught us the importance of building community among students to help them succeed academically, particularly in STEM. Other key components of the program include (1) peer support, (2) the involvement of caring adults, (3) assembling groups of students to talk freely about what they think and believe, and how they see the environment, (4) empowering students to do well in school, (5) giving students incentives for high achievement, (6) family involvement and (7) providing community service opportunities — especially mentoring or supporting young boys. We've also learned important lessons from interviews with mothers and fathers of African American males in the Meyerhoff Program.[1] Though the individual experiences of families varied, many reported that they had emphasized high academic expectations; overcoming adversity; strong limit-setting and discipline; maintenance of family rituals; open, consistent and strong communications; and open discussion of values. Interestingly, we have also learned lessons from some of these parents who can talk about their experiences with other sons who have not been as successful academically. We can often learn more from challenging and difficult cases than we can from successful ones.

Understanding the perspectives of experienced parents of academically successful black males is particularly important for school counselors because they and other educators have assumed many of the roles traditionally performed by parents. School counselors are great examples of positive role models. They can be particularly effective when they give students the chance to talk about their dreams and aspirations or provide them with opportunities to write about their experiences and thoughts. One challenge we face is that many young black men are not accustomed to expressing their feelings. However, once students trust a school counselor, they are often more willing and sufficiently comfortable to say what they truly think and feel.

It is important to help students dream broadly about possible careers — beyond the typical goals of sports and entertainment. One particularly effective strategy involves school counselors bringing in African American males from different professions to talk with the young men about their own stories, especially the challenges they faced when they were young. School counselors can also help students prepare for future careers by providing appropriate reading materials and opportunities for them to write and talk about what they've read, especially in relationship to their own lives. It's important for these students to know that it is possible to beat the odds.

IT BECAME CLEAR THAT WE NEEDED TO EXPLAIN TO THEM HOW IMPORTANT IT IS WHEN ASKED QUESTIONS TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR PASSION FOR SCIENCE THROUGH THEIR ANSWERS.

At UMBC, we've worked closely with hundreds of high-achieving minority college students in the Meyerhoff Program, and simultaneously with a much younger group of at-risk students in the Choice Program, which we began in 1987 through The Shriver Center at UMBC (named for Sargent and Eunice Kennedy Shriver). UMBC students provide round-the-clock supervision for the young boys (mostly center-city African American youth), empowering them and engaging their families through a variety of services. Youth who enter the program typically fall into two categories: some are first-time offenders, and others come from households where drug use and other factors have put them at high risk. What we've learned from working with these young men over the past 20 years is similar to lessons learned in the Meyerhoff Program and with other African American males on campus. Key lessons include (1) teaching young boys and young men to listen to and analyze the advice they receive, (2) encouraging them to ask good questions, (3) helping them understand not to consider themselves victims, but rather to feel empowered to take ownership of their future, (4) working with students to identify their strengths and (5) helping them recognize their ability to manage their own lives despite all kinds of problems. Giving African American students opportunities to write musical lyrics, for example, and to present their thoughts about important messages expressed through rhythm can be both inspiring and instructive.

The most important lesson we've learned through working with these different populations — high-achieving black males or first-time offenders — is that counselors and teachers can be supportive of these young black males by helping them learn to trust them, by letting students know how much they care, by setting high expectations for the students, by constantly emphasizing how much they believe in them, by focusing on the importance of hard work and respect for authority, and finally, by helping them develop a sense of self and a vision for their future. ■

Prepare your students for college using CollegeEd®, the College Board's college planning and career exploration program: ce.collegeboard.org/about-ce.

1. Details of our conversations with parents, along with other lessons learned through the Meyerhoff program, are reported in our books on raising academically successful children, *Overcoming the Odds* and *Beating the Odds: Raising Academically Successful African American Males, Freeman A. Hrabowski III, Kenneth I. Maton, Geoffrey L. Greif.*

MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN by Patricia J. Martin

The content of this publication series represents the voices of writers and artists as they responded to being asked to reflect on the education of men of color. These individuals share their own personal perspectives, experiences and expertise about the subject. Some of the messages are relayed in an academic fashion; others are expressed in terms of passionate feelings and personal perspectives. Some of the entries may cause you to pause, reflect, and want to seek further information. Other entries may challenge your understanding of the person's worldview or seem of little importance to you and the world in which you live. In the end, it is important to note that to be supportive of men of color in schools today, it will require that we start with the premise that your reality may not be the same as that of some young men of color and that circumstance does not automatically make them "less capable" of being successful in our education systems.

"If it is to be, it is up to me."

This publication series is designed to increase our capacity to find ways to create and support educational success for young men of color. We will need to first see ourselves as the starting point for finding solutions that move from doing what we have always done, to doing what works for these students. We will not be able to make change happen if we are unable also to change and represent that change in actions. We cannot give up striving to reach the outcomes we want for our young men of color — those that will ensure them ways of participating in and benefiting from being well prepared for engaging in a 21st-century knowledge- and technology-based world. However, we must support these young people in different ways so that they are not forced to give up who they are and their fundamental culture and identity to do so.

Diversity in school demographics — race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, language, religion — is the new norm. We must diversify our methods, delivery and substance to respond to the new order.

A Tool for Change

We encourage you to use the writings and artwork in this and the following volumes in this series to drive thinking and conversation around how we can improve the educational experiences of young men of color.

1. After reading an article, write down what you read that was a new concept for you, one you had not heard before. What caused you to pause? What information parallels your beliefs and understanding and what does not?
2. Spend some time talking to others about the article. Pick both those with whom you share a common perspective as well as those who hold divergent views. Compare your understandings from both groups. Reflect on your findings.
3. Consider sharing the article as part of a group discussion to encourage open dialogue and critical thinking around the issue and potential solutions. ■

Download the companion workbook for school counselors and learn more about how to transform the educational experiences of young men of color with NOSCA tools and resources: nosca.collegeboard.org/research-policies/young-men-of-color.

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CollegeBoard
Advocacy & Policy Center

About the College Board
The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center was established to help transform education in America. Guided by the College Board's principles of excellence and equity in education, we work to ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. We make critical connections between policy, research and real-world practice to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in education today.

For further information, visit advocacy.collegeboard.org.

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in advancing school reform and student achievement. It seeks to endorse and institutionalize school counseling practice that advocates for equitable educational access and rigorous academic preparation necessary for college readiness for all students.

For further information, visit nosca.collegeboard.org.

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